



## Economic Impact Analysis Virginia Department of Planning and Budget

---

**24 VAC 30-73 – Access Management Regulations**  
**Department of Transportation**  
September 7, 2012

---

### **Summary of the Proposed Amendments to Regulation**

The Commonwealth Transportation Board (Board) proposes to repeal 24VAC 30-72 (Access Management Regulations: Principal Arterials) and to incorporate its provisions in 24 VAC 30-73 (Access Management Regulations: Minor Arterials, Collectors, and Local Streets). The latter chapter would be renamed simply Access Management Regulations. Further, the Board proposes to: 1) allow an alternative to the current requirement that low volume commercial entrance design and construction meet stopping sight distance provisions, and 2) amend language for improved clarity.

### **Result of Analysis**

The benefits likely exceed the costs for all proposed changes.

### **Estimated Economic Impact**

Under the current regulations low volume commercial entrance design and construction must meet *stopping sight distance* provisions in the Road Design Manual. The Board proposes to allow either meeting the *stopping sight distance* provisions or *intersection sight distance* provisions.

According to the Department of Transportation (Department), traditional stopping sight distance provisions are sometimes not feasible, particularly in mountainous areas. Currently in such cases the Department's Location & Design Division requires the submittal of an application for an entrance design exception for stopping sight distance. There is no application fee. The engineering documentation provided by the applicant to justify why the request would not cause

a safety hazard would likely cost an average of \$1,000.<sup>1</sup> Thus, the proposal to allow intersection sight distance instead of stopping sight distance would eliminate the approximate \$1,000 cost for engineering documentation.

The low volume entrance category is only available to a narrow range of land uses (between 10 -50 trips per day, e.g. five lot private road subdivision, agricultural uses such as poultry houses, orchards, greenhouses). The Department estimates that there are no more than 50 to 75 developed annually. Of these, about 10%, or five to seven entrances, would likely be located in sufficiently rolling terrain that a stopping sight distance exception would be requested.<sup>2</sup> Thus, the proposal to allow either meeting the stopping sight distance provisions or intersection sight distance provisions would result in an estimated total annual cost savings of \$5,000 to \$7,000 for the affected property owners.

Repealing 24VAC 30-72 (Access Management Regulations: Principal Arterials) and incorporating its provisions in 24 VAC 30-73 (Access Management Regulations: Minor Arterials, Collectors, and Local Streets) would have no impact on requirements for regulated entities. The proposed clarifying changes will also not affect requirements, but may nevertheless be somewhat beneficial to the extent that they reduce potential confusion among affected and other interested parties.

## **Businesses and Entities Affected**

These regulations affect individuals and companies who apply for entrance permits and construct entrances connecting their businesses, residences, or subdivisions to the highway, as well as contractors and the public who interact with these entrances. The Department issued 2,579 entrance permits (private and commercial) during calendar year 2011, generally for new construction access to the highways. The number of entities affected each year is less than the total permits issued each year because many businesses, whether new or existing, obtain more than one permit (e.g. multiple entrances to the property).

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Department of Transportation

<sup>2</sup> Ibid

## **Localities Particularly Affected**

The proposed amendments affect all localities. The proposal to allow either meeting the stopping sight distance provisions or intersection sight distance provisions would particularly affect mountainous localities.

## **Projected Impact on Employment**

The proposal amendments are unlikely to significantly affect employment.

## **Effects on the Use and Value of Private Property**

The proposal to allow either meeting the stopping sight distance provisions or intersection sight distance provisions would eliminate an approximate \$1,000 cost for engineering documentation for affected property owners.

## **Small Businesses: Costs and Other Effects**

The proposal to allow either meeting the stopping sight distance provisions or intersection sight distance provisions would eliminate an approximate \$1,000 cost for engineering documentation for affected small businesses. Commensurately, some small engineering firms would likely lose the potential business associated with producing the documentation.

## **Small Businesses: Alternative Method that Minimizes Adverse Impact**

The proposed amendments do not adversely affect small businesses beyond potential moderate loss of demand for the services of some small engineering firms. This reduced demand is associated with reduced cost for other small firms and overall improved efficiency. Thus, there is likely no net adverse impact for small businesses and no apparent alternative method that would produce greater net benefit.

## **Real Estate Development Costs**

The proposal to allow either meeting the stopping sight distance provisions or intersection sight distance provisions would eliminate an approximate \$1,000 cost for engineering documentation for each of the owners of the approximate five to seven entrances developed per annum located in sufficiently rolling terrain to be affected.

## Legal Mandate

The Department of Planning and Budget (DPB) has analyzed the economic impact of this proposed regulation in accordance with Section 2.2-4007.04 of the Administrative Process Act and Executive Order Number 14 (10). Section 2.2-4007.04 requires that such economic impact analyses include, but need not be limited to, the projected number of businesses or other entities to whom the regulation would apply, the identity of any localities and types of businesses or other entities particularly affected, the projected number of persons and employment positions to be affected, the projected costs to affected businesses or entities to implement or comply with the regulation, and the impact on the use and value of private property. Further, if the proposed regulation has adverse effect on small businesses, Section 2.2-4007.04 requires that such economic impact analyses include (i) an identification and estimate of the number of small businesses subject to the regulation; (ii) the projected reporting, recordkeeping, and other administrative costs required for small businesses to comply with the regulation, including the type of professional skills necessary for preparing required reports and other documents; (iii) a statement of the probable effect of the regulation on affected small businesses; and (iv) a description of any less intrusive or less costly alternative methods of achieving the purpose of the regulation. The analysis presented above represents DPB's best estimate of these economic impacts.